

Conference on Science and the Northwest Forest Plan: Knowledge Gained Over a Decade

April 18–20, 2005
Jantzen Beach Doubletree Hotel
Portland, Oregon

IN 1994, THE NORTHWEST FOREST PLAN was adopted for almost 25 million acres administered by the Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, and other federal agencies in the range of the northern spotted owl. Since this plan's implementation, scientific understanding about how forests work has increased. For example, more is known about the role of disturbance, resiliency of systems, and biodiversity at broad landscape scales. A specific monitoring effort is underway to evaluate the success of the plan in achieving its objectives based on new scientific knowledge on key topics that include old-growth forest habitat, watersheds, and rural economies. Information from this effort and an overall advance in knowledge will increase understanding of these forests as future management takes place.

The monitoring data and research reports will be published in 2005. A conference in conjunction with the publishing of these reports will allow timely sharing of this information and the overall current state of knowledge about forests within the area of the Northwest Forest Plan.

Purpose

A 3-day conference will be convened to: (1) develop awareness and understanding of science information from the Northwest Forest Plan monitoring program status and trends reports; (2) evaluate effectiveness of the Plan; (3) describe advances in the state of knowledge over the last decade; and (4) explore policy and management implications of these findings.

Audience

The conference's audience will be people who make and influence policy and decisions about land management in the Pacific Northwest. The primary audience will be policymakers, land managers, and resource specialists from federal agencies.

A secondary audience will include people from universities, state agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and interested publics.

Content

The conference will provide key findings and advances in the state of knowledge related to the following: northern spotted owl population and habitat, marbled murrelet population and habitat, late-successional old growth habitat, watershed conditions, and socioeconomic characteristics. Syntheses of scientific information will also be presented on topics such as aquatic conservation strategy, threatened and endangered species, socioeconomic changes, and adaptive management. Management implications and policy options that address this scientific knowledge will be discussed by land managers and policymakers.

Potential Sponsors

Potential sponsors include Federal Agencies associated with the Northwest Forest Plan (e.g., USDA Forest Service, U.S. Geological Survey, Bureau of Land Management, Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, etc.) and university partners.

Agenda Development

A steering committee of representatives from the sponsoring organizations will convene to develop the content and an agenda, format, and other conference elements such as proceedings.

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